

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 071569
ORIGIN SCS-06

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 071569

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC:(SCHERMERHORN, JOHN)

SUBJECT: W/W:JOHN SCHERMERHORN

1. DEPARTMENT HAS RECEIVED FOLLOWING LETTER OF COMPLAINT FROM MR. JOHN SCHERMERHORN, ADDRESSED TO SECRETARY VANCE. DEPARTMENT NOTES THIS IS SECOND LETTER OF COMPLAINT RECEIVED WITHIN FEW DAYS OF EACH OTHER.

2. QUOTE: DEAR SECRETARY VANCE: I AM A MEMBER OF A GROUP FROM DALLAS CONSULTING WITH THE KUWAIT UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF MEDICINE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTH EDUCATION IN THIS STATE. SINCE OUR ARRIVAL ON FRIDAY WE HAVE MET WITH MANY OF THE OFFICIALS OF THE UNIVERSITY, ALWAYS RECEIVING MOST GRACIOUS TREATMENT. IN ADDITION, WE HAVE MET WITH THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION, THE MINISTER OF HEALTH, AND, YESTERDAY MORNING FOR ALMOST ONE-HALF HOUR, THE PRIME MINISTER. ALWAYS WE WERE MADE MOST WELCOME AND IT WAS CLEAR THAT WE HAD THEIR RESPECT AND UNDIVIDED
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ATTENTION.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE, ALAS, WAS MY RECEPTION SHORTLY AFTER NOON YESTERDAY AT THE AMERICAN EMBASSY. I APPROACHED THE GUARD HOUSE AT THE GATE AND WAS STOPPED BY AN ARMED KUWAITI SOLDIER. I REQUESTED PERMISSION TO ENTER THE GROUNDS TO TAKE A PHOTOGRAPH.

AN ARABIC CIVILIAN WAS SUMMONED AND SUGGESTED I TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE SIDEWALK. (AS YOU MAY KNOW, THERE ARE NO APERTURES IN THE WALL OR GATES) I PERSISTED AND HE FINALLY TELEPHONED SOMEONE IN THE EMBASSY. AFTER A WAIT OF SEVERAL MINUTES A YOUNG AMERICAN APPEARED SAYING FIRMLY AND WITH NO APOLOGIES THAT I COULD NOT BE ADMITTED EVEN THOUGH I INFORMED HIM I WAS AN AMERICAN CITIZEN. AT NOTIME WAS I ASKED TO IDENTIFY MYSELF OR SHOW MY PASSPORT AND HE DID NOT IDENTIFY HIMSELF. AFTER SUGGESTING I TAKE PICTURES FROM MY HOTEL WINDOW, HE TERMINATED THE CONVERSATION. I CANNOT BELIEVE THAT ANY EMBASSY OF MY COUNTRY IS SO BUSY THAT IT CANNOT PROVIDE A FEW MINUTES TO MAKE A CITIZEN WELCOME. THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE GRACIOUS HOSPITALITY AT 10:30 A.M., OF THIS HIGHNESS SHEIKH SAAD AL ABDULLA AND THE CURT AND ABRUPT DISMISSAL AT 12:10 P.M. BY MY OWN EMBASSY WAS A SOURCE OF DEEP DISMAY AND NOT TOO SOON TO BE FORGOTTEN. IF OUR REPRESENTATIVES ABROAD ARE TYPIFIED BY THE PERSONNEL AT THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN KUWAIT THEN I AM LITTLE SURPRISED THAT AMERICANS ARE NOT ALWAYS AS WELCOME AS THEY MIGHT WISH TO BE. QUOTE

3. PLEASE ADVISE DEPARTMENT OF DETAILS, AND FORWARD REPORT, INCLUDE PROPOSED DRAFT REPLY BY IMMEDIATE UNCLASSIFIED

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CABLE TO CA/SCS/WW FOR DEPARTMENT'S USE IN RESPONDING TO INQUIRY. VANCE

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